

Dashing Rockell Worries

WYCOMBE LET POINT SLIP

Wycombe W 1 Wal'stow Av 1

AMATEUR CUP winners Walthamstow Avenue, fielding four reserves in attack, had to fight a desperate rearguard action before snatching an Isthmian League point at Loakes Park yesterday—a point which might well win them the League title.

Avenue missed England star Jim Lewis far more than Wycombe missed Pat Bates. Michael Rockell, switched from the wing to centre forward, played his role perfectly, wandering freely to draw the anxious Avenue defence out of position.

Rockell's fierce seventh-minute header from Jack Tomlin's corner gave Wycombe the lead. Avenue goalkeeper Garry McGuire was continually in action as the reshaped Wycombe attack showed lively form.

Veteran Tomlin, recalled to the first team, was too lively for full-back Ron Bambridge, and from one of his moves Rockell kicked the ball over the bar.

Inspired by the non-stop Reg Groves and Jim Sully, Avenue attacked briskly after the interval and Dave Gough equalised from a through pass by Terry Keene.

The Avenue goal had several escapes, including an Ivor Ashby lob which landed on the cross-bar. Wycombe centre-half John Fisher was the outstanding defender. He dominated the Avenue inside forwards.

The Cup Winners

By ARGUS

Wycombe Wanderers 1 Walthamstow Avenue 1

THE one Jim Lewis present at Loakes Park on Saturday afternoon—soccer-wise white haired Jim senior—wore a happy smile as his reserve sprinkled team grafted an Isthmian League point from Wycombe Wanderers, a point Avenue scarcely deserved but which will probably have won them the league and cup double.

Jim Lewis Junior was adding to his long line of England international honours — and how Walthamstow missed him.

With Lewis and Brian Harvey playing for their country and Alan Minall injured, Avenue had a strange looking attack on view but so had Wycombe.

Undoubted success of the afternoon was Michael Rockell switched from wing to centre-forward in place of Paul Bates. Rockell always works terribly hard but against Avenue he allied intelligence to dash, probing the visiting defence by sudden spurts on either wing and a shrewd use of the through ball.

Wanderers were the far more adaptable side, moving the ball sweetly through a harassed, badgered and frankly anxious Avenue defence and looking much more lively near goal.

It was good to see Jack Tomlin stumping the wing—on the unaccustomed right flank this time—and showing all his old control and wizardry.

Saddest aspect of this Wycombe attacking display was the loss of form of Ivor Ashby who looked laboured at times and lost chances through slowness to the ball.

A goal down at the break Avenue were lucky to be so close. They had more of the second half play — equalised through centre-forward Dave Gough — and began to test the Wycombe defence.

Best defender on both teams was John Fisher, Wycombe's dominating pivot. His distribution has improved out of all recognition and he was much too powerful for the Avenue inside forwards.

COOL LEWIS

There was another cool calculating display by Alistair Lewis a youngster who can give Dennis Atkins, his full back partner, plenty of tips, when it comes to making intelligent and accurate use of the ball.

Rockell headed a beautiful goal for Wycombe after seven minutes, from Tomlin's corner kick, and Gary McGuire, the Avenue goalkeeper, saw plenty of action. With Rockell, Trott and Tomlin playing on top of their form the Walthamstow goal was lucky to survive.

Once Gough had equalised in the 52nd minute Avenue had some grim defending to do and their anxiety and tension led to some over zealous tackling. Ashby headed the ball onto the top of the visitor's crossbar and in the last seconds McGuire made a desperate save from Tomlin and Murphy.